

GENERAL NOTES.

Letter from Dr. Gray.—DEAR EDITOR: You will be glad to know and to announce to your readers that Dr. Englemann, who was, as the *September Gazette* says, "quite ill at Strasburg," has returned to us in good condition. When he came to us yesterday he showed no mark of illness nor lack of vigor.

Will you allow me to offer some remarks on your last issue? When a man has gone, he can not control the publication of his letters, nor can his friends, altogether. But I can imagine the distress with which the sensitive, modest and cautious Dr. Torrey would have read in print the youthful letter which your correspondent has sent you. I knew him intimately for forty years, and I can say that this letter of his is uncharacteristic. How young and inexperienced he then was may be seen from his statement that he and Mr. Knevels (which you have printed *Kaerely*) had not time to write a flora with full description of the region thirty miles around New York that year, "so have put it off till next spring."

Do you think that botanists will approve your judgment, pronounced editorially and unqualifiedly, that "*it was very clearly shown that what must be considered as three distinct species of corn have been produced artificially?*" Is it really a scientific journal in which we read—not the announcement of discoveries made and laid before the world for judgment—but the announcement of discoveries which are going to be made? And in this wise:

"Really he is seeing incipient species springing up under his own manipulation, and can recognize the forces which are effecting the change. * * * Already has Dr. S. intimated certain results which will completely overturn and tear up by the roots some of our preconceived notions, and one of these days we may look for something startling." If I were in the place of the acute and zealous experimenter in question, I should deplore this kind of announcement, feeling that it would tend to create a prejudice against rather than in favor of the discoveries I had made, or was expecting to make.

Asking you to receive this volunteered counsel for whatever it may be worth, I remain truly your friend—A. GRAY.

Dr. Torrey's Letter.—The readers of the *BOTANICAL GAZETTE* are greatly indebted to Mr. Joseph F. James for the interesting undated letter from Dr. Torrey, which appeared in the last number. There is, however, evidence that the date assigned to it by Mr. James is too recent.

1. The "Lyceum of Natural History in the City of New York" spoken of in the letter, was incorporated April 20, 1818, but the society was formed in the latter part of February, 1817. A prefatory note prepared by Dr. Torrey for the Catalogue of Plants growing within thirty miles of New York, informs us that it was reported to the Lyceum Dec. 17, 1817, in pursuance of a resolution passed May 5, 1817. Dr. Torrey's allusion to "the society which we formed last winter," and to this catalogue as then in preparation, shows that the letter was written in the summer of 1817.

2. The first volume of Elliott's *Sketch of the Botany of South Carolina and Georgia* does indeed bear upon its title page the date of 1821, but we know that

it was issued in parts, at different dates, and as Dr. Torrey expressly says that he had received of the work as far as Pentandria Digynia, it is clear that he had only the first three parts. Dr. Gray (see his notes on the dates of issue of Elliott's sketch in *American Journal Science*, Series 3, Vol. 13, p. 81, 82,) has fixed the issue of Part III. as on or before April 3, 1817. This again would give the summer of 1817 as the period when the little circle of New York botanists were rejoicing over the possession of three parts of Elliott's work. At this time Dr. Torrey had just attained the age of twenty-one.

Such allusions as he had occasion in after years to make to Rafinesque's work, were even less complimentary than those of the letter.—J. H. R.

EDITORS GAZETTE:—Young botanists should all thank you for Dr. Torrey's letter, printed in the September GAZETTE. We all know his reputation as a cautious, careful, grand botanist, and he has been set off too long upon an unattainable pedestal. But now to find him a very enthusiastic and even rash young man is a revelation and a comfort. Young botanists who are so full of eagerness that they expect to do everything in short order and result in doing nothing well, should take courage, for enthusiasm may settle into love, and eagerness be turned into caution.*

Abnormal Anthemis Cotula.—A late flowering specimen of *Anthemis Cotula* presents an anomaly worth noting. The *disk-flowers* are entirely absent, and the head is composed of from 6-20 ligulate flowers arranged in the "double" fashion. These flowers are all *pistillate*, whereas the ray-flowers are usually neutral. The plant has about 30 heads, all showing the same peculiarity. None of its numerous neighbors were abnormal.—C. R. B.

Additional Note on Ustilagineæ.—In the August number of the GAZETTE reference was made to a *Doassansia* found growing on *Potamogeton* by Mr. Fletcher. At the time of writing, Cornu's paper, in which the genus was first described, had not been received in this country. Since then the number of the *Annales des Sciences* containing Cornu's description and plate, has come to hand. The genus is characterized by having globular masses of spores covered by a layer of dark ellipsoidal or prismatic cells. In germination the masses split open and the spores, thus set free, give out short tubes surmounted by a whorl of secondary cells resembling the germination in *Tilletia*. The species on *Potamogeton* has been recognized by De Bary as the *Sclerotium occultum* of H. Hoffman's Tab. Analyt. Fung. The type of the genus *Doassansia*, *D. alismatis* Cornu, was found on *Alisma Plantago* on an excursion to Lake Minnetonka during the meeting of the A. A. A. S. *Entyloma Menispermii* was also found in abundance near Hotel Lafayette. *Entyloma Lobelivæ* was found at Malden, Mass., by Mr. A. B. Seymour in July, and I have found it in several localities at Shelburne, N. H., so that the species is probably common in the East. In the proceedings of the Schlesische Gesellschaft for 1882, an *Entyloma Thalictri* is mentioned as a new species, found by Dr. Schroeter. I have not yet seen the description, but it is possible that it is to this species that the form on *Thalictrum*, found by Prof. Trelease, should be referred.—W. G. FARLOW.

Aquilegia longissima.—Apropos of Dr. Gray's note, it may be allowable to call attention to several of our American flowers with long, slender spurs, adapted to fertilization by the aid of *Aphingidae*. Beside the long-spurred *Aquilegia*, which, despite the opinions of certain English writers on floral evolution, are more highly specialized than the European species of the genus, several flowers of this description occur in the West and Southwest. In the genus *Enothera* there are not less than four such: *E. Missouriensis* (2-5'), *E. microsecles* (4-5'), *E. Jamesii* (3-5½'), and *E. caespitosa* (2-7'). The flowers of *Macrosiphonia Berlandieri* are 3-5 inches long. *Mirabilis Wrightiana* reaches a length of 4½'; and *M. longiflora* 6½'; while over the line in Mexico, some of the species of *Nicotiana*, e. g. *N. longiflora*, reach a length of above three and a half inches.

These flowers require a longer proboscis than that of our common Eastern moths. Probably their most frequent visitor will be found to be *Amphonyx Anteus* Drury, one specimen of which, which was kindly examined for me by Mr. S. Henshaw, of the Boston Society of Natural History, had a tongue 5¾ inches long. It is quite probable that this length may be exceeded in other individuals.—WM. TRELEASE.

The Grasses of the U. S.—Allow me to say in response to your kind note in the last number of the GAZETTE, respecting the recent pamphlet on the Grasses of the United States, that it is somewhat experimental, and designed to call out information and criticism as well as to give needed assistance, especially to Western botanists. A few omissions have been already pointed out, as for instance, *Panicum virgatum*, L., and *Glyceria Canadensis*, Trin., also some typographical errors. There is also an omission of one genus, viz. *Scleropogon*, of which we have at least one species in Texas and the South-west, viz: *S. Karwinskianus*, Benth., which has been frequently distributed under the name of *Tricuspis monstrosa*, Munro. Any information respecting omissions, errors, or notes as to local names, uses, etc., will be thankfully received.—GEO. VASEY.

Abnormal Clematis.—I have just had handed to me by Prof. E. W. Blake, Jr., a branch of *Clematis*, probably *C. patens*, showing a peculiar abnormality. It is terminated by the usual large flower. The first foliage leaf has the petiole twisted, as usual, for climbing. Above this the leaflet, for there is but one, is expanded into a blade, about half of which is petaloid, while the rest is green. The plant was grown in New Haven.—W. W. BAILEY.

Erratum.—In my note on local names, in last issue, there occurs an *erratum*. For "mining berry" read "minnie-berry." But who ever reads a correction?—W. W. BAILEY.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

MR. BUCKLEY has just named a Texan oak for Dr. Vasey, being a shrub or small tree of the group of black oaks.

WE WOULD earnestly urge all botanists who have grievances against the Postoffice Department in reference to packages of specimens to state them very briefly to Dr. Farlow, of Cambridge, Mass., Prof. Bessey, of Ames, Iowa, or